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East Elloe
Rural District Council



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER

and the

Chief Sanitary Inspector

for the

Year 1948

STAFF OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Medical Officer :

I. M. CULLUM, M.D., B.S. (Lond.), D.P.H.; D.C.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector :

W. B. HITCHINGS, B.Sc. (Hons.), M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Additional Sanitary Inspector :

E. H. MOTLEY, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Clerk :

Miss J. E. LOND.

East Elloe Rural District Council

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Chairman :

Councillor A. WELLS.

Members :

Councillor R. G. BARWELL.

„ F. BAXTER.

,, F. BOWD, J.P.

Rev. C. V. BROWNE-WILKINSON.

„ J. W. COOPER.

(Elected September, 1948).

W. D. CURTIS.

„ J. CUTHBERT.

„ J. DICKINSON.

„ A. B. ENTWISTLE.

,, H. W. FARROW, J.P.

„ S. GARNER.

„ N. A. GRIMWOOD.

., Mrs. A. H. S. HUNTER.

„ C. HESKETH.

,, A. G. LENTON, J.P.

H. L. NEAVERSON.

„ C. I. PATCHETT.

„ H. PIGGINS.

„ T. H. ROSE.

„ T. W. SELBY.

„ G. H. SNASDELL.

Rev. F. TATTERSALL.

(Resigned July, 1948).

., A. WHITE.

To the Chairman and Members of the East Elloe Rural District Council

Madam and Gentlemen,

I present herewith my report for the year 1948.

The year witnessed the coming into force of two Acts of Parliament having far-reaching social consequences, viz. the National Health Service Act, 1946 and the National Assistance Act, 1948. It is yet too early to appreciate the full effect of this legislation which has revolutionised certain aspects of English life, but reference is made in the body of the report to some of the administrative consequences in the district.

The Council's housing schemes progressed satisfactorily during the year and the completion of the 1,000th Council house was marked by an appropriate ceremony.

More commodious and convenient office accommodation which has facilitated the work of the Health Department became available at the beginning of the year.

It is a pleasure to express my appreciation of the work done by the two sanitary inspectors, Messrs. Hitchings and Motley, and I desire to thank the officials of other departments and members of the Council for their courtesy and consideration at all times.

I have the honour to be Madam, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

I. M. CULLUM,
Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS FOR THE AREA.

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	...	84,597
Registrar-General's estimate of the civilian resident population appropriate to the calculation of the death rate	...	...	...	...	...	22,930
Number of inhabited houses at the end of 1948						6,698
Rateable value at 31st March, 1949	...	...				£68,867
Product of a penny rate at 31st March, 1949	...	£262	19s.	4.9d.		

		M.	F.	Total	
<u>Live Births</u>	{				Birth rate per 1,000 of estimated civilian resident population 19.32
	Legitimate	233	188	421	
	Illegitimate	13	9	22	
Total Live Births		<u>246</u>	<u>197</u>	<u>443</u>	

<u>Still Births</u>	{				Rate per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births 24.23
	Legitimate	9	2	11	
	Illegitimate	—	—	—	
Total Still Births		<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11</u>	

Deaths	116	94	210	Death rate per 1,000 of estimated civilian resident population 9.16

Deaths from Puerperal and other Maternal Causes :

					Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births.
			Deaths.		
Puerperal and post-abortional sepsis	{				
Other Maternal Causes	...	...	Nil		Nil

Numbers of Deaths of Infants under one year of age :

		M.	F.	Total
<u>Deaths</u>	{ Legitimate	7	2	9
	{ Illegitimate	1	1	2
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		8	3	11
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Death Rates of Infants under one year of age :

All infants per 1,000 live births	24.83
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births ...	21.38
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births ...	90.91

				M.	F.	Total
<u>Deaths from</u>	Cancer (all ages) ... ..	...	...	11	23	34
	Measles (all ages) ... ..	...	...	—	—	—
	Whooping Cough (all ages) ...	...	...	—	—	—
	Diarrhoea ... ..	...	...	1	—	1

Comments on the Vital Statistics.

The birth rate of 19.32 per 1,000 estimated population is higher than the average for England and Wales of 17.9 but is less than the East Elloe rate for 1947 of 23.15. The death rate of 9.16 is below the average for England and Wales, which is a usual finding for a rural district.

The death rate for infants under one year of age (24.83) is less than the figure for England and Wales of 34 and is the lowest figure ever recorded in the area.

NUMBERS OF DEATHS FROM PARTICULAR CAUSES.

Cause of Death						Male	Female	Total
Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Cerebro-spinal fever	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Scarlet fever	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	3
Other forms of tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	—	2	2
Syphilitic diseases	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Acute polio-myelitis and polio-encephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Acute infectious encephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Cancer of buccal cavity and oesophagus (M)	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
uterus (F)	...	...	...	...	...	—	5	5
Cancer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	2	2	4
Cancer of breast	...	...	...	...	...	—	6	6
Cancer of all other sites	...	...	...	...	...	9	10	19
Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Intracranial vascular lesions	...	...	...	...	...	10	16	26
Heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	39	16	55
Other disease of circulatory system	...	...	...	...	...	5	4	9
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	8	3	11
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	4	5	9
Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	...	...	2	—	2
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	3
Diarrhoea under two years	...	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Other digestive diseases	...	...	...	...	...	3	—	3
Nephritis	...	...	...	...	...	2	—	2
Puerperal and post-abortion al sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Other maternal causes	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Premature birth	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
Congenital malformations, birth injury, infant diseases	...	...	...	...	...	5	2	7
Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	4
Road Traffic accidents	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	4
Other violent causes	...	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
All other causes	...	...	...	...	...	12	16	28
Totals						116	94	210

Social Conditions.

The bulk of the adult male population is engaged in agricultural work. There are a considerable number of small holdings under the control of the Crown and the County Council. Large quantities of potatoes, sugar beet, cereals, tomatoes, flowers, bulbs and fruit are grown and the cultivation of these crops provides seasonal employment for many of the adult female population. There are three Women's Land Army Hostels and two Displaced Persons Hostels in the district.

Flour milling is carried on at Holbeach and an agricultural engineering business has been established during the last few years. There is an expanding canning industry at Long Sutton and this employs a considerable amount of labour. At Sutton Bridge there is a large timber business and the manufacture of chip baskets is also carried out.

Transport facilities vary according to the part of the district. The railway from Spalding to King's Lynn goes through Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge and there are reasonable 'bus facilities from these towns to Spalding and King's Lynn. Other parts of the district have 'bus facilities to Wisbech and Spalding.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

July 5th, 1948 was the appointed day for the operation of the National Health Service Act, 1946, and a number of administrative changes have resulted which have had some effect on the general provision of health services for the area.

(a) Laboratory facilities :

The laboratory of the County Hall, Boston, is now administered by the Regional Hospital Board. Clinical pathology is carried out there, and specimens are submitted by general practitioners and by the various hospitals including Holbeach Hospital. Public health work including the examination of water, milk, ice cream, etc., is carried out by the Public Health Laboratory Service at Peterborough or Lincoln.

(b) Ambulance facilities :

Since July 5th, 1948, all ambulances in the county have been operated by the Transport Department of the County Council and an efficient and comprehensive service is available.

(c) Home Nursing :

A home nursing service is provided by the County Council, using the services of the various district nurses formerly under the control of the District Nursing Association.

(d) Clinics and Treatment Centres :

The County Council provides Infant Welfare Centres and Ante-natal Clinics at Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge.

(e) Hospitals :

All hospitals became the responsibility of the Regional Hospital Boards on July 5th, 1948. On that date the County of Holland Joint Hospital Board, to which the East Elloe Rural District Council was a contributory authority, was dissolved, and the Joint Isolation Hospital at Boston passed to the Sheffield Regional Hospital Board.

Holbeach Hospital ceased to be an Emergency Hospital and passed from the County Council to the Regional Hospital Board. It is now used entirely by the resident civilian population of the district.

Water. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water is purchased in bulk from the Spalding Urban District Council who obtain it from the Lincolnshire lias limestone at Bourne. It is delivered into an elevated steel water tank at Weston, some 2 miles east of Spalding. From the tower electrically driven pumps deliver the water through a system of trunk and distribution mains throughout the East Elloe District. Two other elevated tanks situated at Little Sutton, 15 miles east, and Whaplode Drove, 12 miles south of Spalding respectively, can operate as either feed or balancing tanks.

The total length of mains now laid is approximately 280 miles and at the present time water is available to approx. 20,000 inhabitants and in addition some 242 persons obtain supplies from stand pipes. The average daily water consumption for 1948 was 483,711 gallons as compared with 107,000 gallons in 1936. The total consumption for 1948 was 177.1 million gallons as against 37.59 million gallons in 1936 and 67.17 million gallons in 1938.

A new scheme to improve supplies and meet the ever-increasing demand has been prepared by the Council's Engineer and is now before the Ministry of Health. This provides for 500,000 gallons storage, a new pumping station, electrical pumps and a new trunk main from Weston to the Whaplode—Moulton Boundary to duplicate the existing main. It is intended to duplicate through to Holbeach at a later date.

The Spalding Urban District Council take regular water samples at source for chemical and bacteriological examinations.

A typical analysis of the water going into supply gave the following satisfactory result :—

Bacteria per millilitre at 37 deg. C.	Nil
B. Coli. per 100 millilitre	Nil

Previous chemical analyses which have been made indicate that owing to hardness and its low free carbonic acid content the water is extremely unlikely to possess any plumbo-solvent action.

The following table indicates for each parish the number of dwelling houses and the numbers of the population supplied from public water mains either direct to houses, including houses where the supply is by means of a stand tap placed in the curtilage of the house or by means of stand pipes fitted to the main and supplying several houses.

Parish	Area in Acres	Total Houses	Est. Pop.	MEANS OF SUPPLY.						No Mains Water	
				Direct to Houses.		Standpipes					
				Houses	Pop.	Houses	Pop.	Houses	Pop.	Houses	Pop.
Fleet	6837	393	1345	321	1099	1	3	71	243		
Gedney	11679	627	2146	513	1756	10	34	104	356		
Gedney Hill	1865	120	411	90	309	15	51	15	51		
Lutton	3793	254	870	230	789	2	7	22	74		
Sutton St. Edmund .	4670	162	555	141	483	3	10	18	62		
Sutton St. James ...	2707	194	664	149	510	8	27	37	127		
Little Sutton	743	48	164	44	150	—	—	4	14		
Tydd St. Mary	4637	258	883	208	712	8	27	42	144		
Whaplode	10688	778	2663	607	2078	10	34	161	551		
Holbeach	22666	2010	6882	1696	5806	6	21	308	1055		
Long Sutton	3931	915	3132	747	2557	6	21	162	554		
Sutton Bridge	6164	847	2900	741	2537	—	—	106	363		
Wingland	4217	92	315	47	161	2	7	43	147		
Totals	84597	6698	22930	5534	18947	71	242	1093	3741		

Drainage and Sewerage.

Domestic drainage disposal is, in the main, by the use of underground sedimentation tanks and soakaways. This method, on the whole, functions satisfactorily but in the townships of Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge the majority of the properties have inadequate room for the installation of these arrangements and in many cases direct connection to the road surface water drains has been made. These road drains discharge into dykes which are, in consequence, little better than open cesspools and cause much nuisance.

Large numbers of houses at Holbeach and Sutton Bridge are provided with pail closets. This type of conservancy is objectionable, particularly during the times of collection of the contents of the pails. Many other properties have vault closets which are also unsatisfactory but collection of the contents does not cause the same degree of nuisance.

Such conservancy methods are in any case highly undesirable, providing breeding grounds for flies and making excellent foci for the dissemination of fly-borne diseases. In the interests of public health the conservancy methods in the township areas should be abolished at the earliest opportunity.

Most of the post-war Council housing estates are provided with sewage disposal plants and the maintenance of these is the responsibility of the Health Department.

Sewerage schemes for Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge have been prepared and forwarded to the Ministry. The provision of adequate drainage facilities is essential and in small townships these can only be satisfactorily provided by properly designed sewerage schemes. Without such schemes the development of the districts is greatly hampered.

Public Conveniences.

Satisfactory public conveniences for men and women are provided at Long Sutton, Sutton Bridge and Holbeach.

Public Cleansing.

This service includes the collection of domestic and trade refuse and salvage, the emptying of sanitary pails, privy vaults and cesspools and the disposal of the waste materials. The Sanitary Inspectors supervise the work which is carried out by direct labour.

Two new vehicles, an S & D 10 cu. yd. side loading freighter and an S & D 1,100 gallons cesspool emptier have been obtained during the year. Vehicles employed on public cleansing work now comprise 2 cesspool emptiers and 2 refuse freighters each fitted with a trailer.

Refuse and salvage is collected from the kerbside each week in what may be termed the urban parts of Holbeach, Fleet, Gedney, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge. Service is given to about 3,000 premises each week. Disposal of the refuse is by controlled tipping in pits or on low lying land but unless further sites can be found other methods of disposal may have to be considered. Salvage is sorted at the main Holbeach Depot and waste paper, etc., baled.

In the remainder of the district, comprising the more rural parts, a fortnightly kerbside collection of salvage only is made. This collection was, up to the latter part of the year, carried out for the Council by a private contractor, but with the delivery of the new freighter it has been possible to carry out the work with the Council's own vehicles. It is hoped in the near future that it will be possible to collect refuse as well as salvage in the rural areas. This service in addition to providing a much needed amenity will obviate the nuisance which occurs in many of the villages due to the uncontrolled disposal of domestic refuse by the inhabitants.

Collection of the contents of sanitary pails in the urban parts of Holbeach and Sutton Bridge is carried out in the evenings and normally ends just about dusk. About 900 pails are dealt with each week.

Cesspool and vault emptying is carried out with the two cesspool emptiers. Cesspools are emptied free of charge at not less than 12 monthly intervals and privy vaults whenever application is made. Service is given over the whole of the area.

Disposal of the contents of vaults and cesspools is a difficult matter and some idea of the magnitude of the problem is shown by the fact that during the year approximately 1,500,000 gallons required disposal. At present disposal is on refuse dumps or agricultural land but it is thought that some danger may arise when deposit is on land to which livestock have access. Present methods for the disposal of night soil and cesspool and vault contents cannot be regarded as satisfactory. This provides yet another reason for the introduction of sewerage schemes in the district at the earliest possible moment.

The table below shows how the number of vaults and cesspools emptied each year have steadily increased.

In the year 1940	...	957 vaults and cesspools were emptied.
„ „ 1941	...	1370 „ „ „ „ „
„ „ 1942	...	1540 „ „ „ „ „
„ „ 1943	...	1590 „ „ „ „ „
„ „ 1944	...	1927 „ „ „ „ „
„ „ 1945	...	2098 „ „ „ „ „
„ „ 1946	...	2291 „ „ „ „ „
„ „ 1947	...	2761 „ „ „ „ „
„ „ 1948	...	3550 „ „ „ „ „

In order to deal with such a large number of applications it has been necessary at times to work overtime.

Salvage.

Collections of salvage increased during the year. This resulted from a special salvage drive throughout the area and also from extra efforts made in connection with the Salvage Competition sponsored by the Waste Paper Recovery Association. Total collections of waste paper for the months of April, May and June for the purpose of the competition were 46 tons 19 cwts. 2 qtrs., an increase of 129.3 per cent. over collections in the corresponding months of 1947.

The figures in the following table show the value of salvage sales :—

At the end of 1940	the total value of the sales was £338.				
„ „ 1941	„	„	„	„	£625.
„ „ 1942	„	„	„	„	£1348.
„ „ 1943	„	„	„	„	£1125.
„ „ 1944	„	„	„	„	£852.
„ „ 1945	„	„	„	„	£686.
„ „ 1946	„	„	„	„	£634.
„ „ 1947	„	„	„	„	£803.
„ „ 1948	„	„	„	„	£986.

During the nine years 1940—1948 the total value of the sales was £7,397.

HOUSING.

Progress has been made during the year in connection with the development of Council Housing Sites. The position obtaining on the 25th May, 1949, is shown below.

(A) Permanent Houses.

Houses erected under all schemes prior to 1945—869.

Post War Housing Programme.

Houses completed—214. Houses under erection—66.

Further houses proposed to be erected—372.

(B) Temporary Bungalows.

69 Temporary Bungalows of the Aluminium type have been erected in the district.

Ex-R.A.F. Hutments.

Ex-R.A.F. Hutments at Sutton Bridge have been converted into 40 dwellings and are managed by the Council on behalf of the Ministry of Health.

It will thus be seen that a total of 323 dwellings have been provided since the war but even so there is still a very considerable demand for housing accommodation.

A slum clearance programme begun just before the war had to be abandoned at the outbreak of hostilities. As a consequence many houses in the district are still in an unsatisfactory condition and in ordinary times would be demolished. It is not possible to put this type of property into a satisfactory condition at a reasonable cost and where complaints are made owners are requested to remedy the grosser defects and make the houses reasonably weathertight.

Owing to a shortage of staff it has not been possible to carry out a Survey of housing conditions but it is hoped that this may be possible in the near future so that a true picture of the housing needs of the district can be ascertained. This would prove of great value when slum clearance work is again undertaken.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Owing to the growing incidence of cases of food poisoning and a greater awareness on the part of all regarding the unsatisfactory ways in which foods are handled, steps have been taken to establish proper standards of hygiene for all food premises and for the employees. However, it is no use having standards unless they are enforced and it has to be pointed out that the present staff is not sufficient for the adequate inspection and supervision of food premises.

(a) Milk.

Numerous inspections were carried out during the year at cow-sheds and dairies. These inspections were mainly in connection with persons intending to commence milk production. Full co-operation was given by the County Milk Advisory Officer.

Designated Milk.

Four samples of bottled pasteurised milk sold in the area were taken during the year. The milk is produced from pasteurising establishments outside the district. The results of analyses of these samples were not satisfactory and the licensing authorities of the areas in which the milk was produced were informed.

Samples of heat-treated milk were taken during the year in connection with an application for a licence to pasteurise milk. These samples were found to be unsatisfactory. The premises concerned were not considered suitable and the producer was informed of the necessary work and improvements which were required before the premises could be considered suitable.

(b) Ice Cream.

There are at present three manufacturers in the district of whom, only one is producing ice cream on a large scale. His premises are satisfactory and are fitted with modern equipment. The other two manufacturers are producing small quantities.

Samples of the ice cream have been taken and were found to be in Provisional Grade 3.

Meat Inspection.

The commercial slaughter of animals for human consumption is not carried out in this district and only a limited number of carcasses are inspected.

Food Inspection.

Quantities of food stuffs, generally in the possession of local tradesmen, have been examined, and where necessary Voluntary Surrender Certificates issued. Foodstuffs condemned during the year included

- 881 tins of Canned Foods.
- 126 lb. Bread.
- 131 Eggs.
- 22 x 2 oz. Blocks of Chocolate.
- 21 jars of Pickles.
- 1 jar of Mincemeat.
- 23³/₄ lb. of Tea.
- 1³/₄ lb. of Breakfast Cereals.
- 7 lb. of Macaroni Soyagetti.
- 1¹/₂ cwts. of Sago.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The numbers of confirmed cases of infectious disease notified by Medical Practitioners are given in the following table.

Disease	No. of Cases.
Smallpox	—
Scarlet Fever	54
Diphtheria	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	4
Pneumonia	6
Measles	42
Whooping Cough	36
Erysipelas	3
Tuberculosis	24
Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis	—
Total	169

The table below is an analysis of the above diseases in various age groups. The age groups are generally those of the Quarterly Return.

Disease.	Age group in years.								Totals
	0-	1-	3-	5-	10-	15-	25-	Not known	
Scarlet Fever	—	3	12	32	5	1	1	—	54
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—	—	—	1	3	—	4
Pneumonia	—	—	—	1	1	1	3	—	6
Measles	4	4	7	13	12	2	—	—	42
Whooping Cough	1	11	9	13	2	—	—	—	36
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Diphtheria Immunisation.

300 children under 5 years of age and 64 children between the ages of 5 and 14 were immunised against Diphtheria and a further 90 children were given secondary or “ Booster ” injections.

Most of the immunisation work is carried out by the Assistant County Medical Officers and the Health Visitors using A.P.T.

Tuberculosis.

A Register of all cases of Tuberculosis is kept by the Health Department. Copies of all notifications of tuberculosis are passed to the County Medical Officer of Health and the cases are visited by one of the sanitary inspectors so that details of living conditions, etc., may be obtained. Where death occurs a visit is made and fumigation facilities explained and offered. Fumigation work is carried out by the Department.

The total number of cases on the Register is 71. 24 new cases were notified during the year and 10 cases were removed from the register. Of the 10 removals from the register, 7 were due to death, 1 person left the district and 2 cases were removed as cured.

In the following table an analysis is given of the number of new cases and the number of deaths in the various age groups.

Age Period in years	NEW CASES				CURES				DEATHS			
	Pulmon-ary		Non Pulmon-ary		Pulmon-ary		Non Pulmon-ary		Pulmon-ary		Non Pulmon-ary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15	1	1	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
15—25	2	3	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
25—35	2	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45	3	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—
45—55	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
55—65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
65 & over	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Totals	10	9	1	4	1	—	1	—	4	1	—	2

Scabies.

The joint scheme commenced in 1943 has continued in operation. 19 persons from East Elloe attended the Spalding Treatment Centres, and received 36 treatments.

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 — 1948.

During the year 11 inspections were made of factory premises in the district. Three written notices were served in connection with defective or unsuitable sanitary conveniences and one written notice in connection with want of cleanliness of a factory. There were no prosecutions.

